

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Status of Claims:

Claims 33-42, 44 and 46 are currently being cancelled.

Claim 33 is currently being amended.

No claims are currently being added.

This amendment and reply cancels and amends claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After canceling and amending the claims as set forth above, claims 25-33, 43 and 45 are now pending in this application.

Indication of Allowable Subject Matter:

Applicant appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter made in the Office Action with respect to claims 25-33, 43 and 45 (“allowed”) and claim 46 (“objected to”). By way of this amendment and reply, presently pending independent claim 33 has been amended to include the features of “objected to” (and now canceled) claim 46. Therefore, presently pending independent claim 33 is now in allowable form based on the indications made in the Office Action with respect to claim 46.

Claim Rejections – Prior Art:

In the Office Action, claims 33-42 and 44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,438,392 to Toba in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,125,264 to Watanabe. Due to the cancellation of claims 34-42 and 44, and due to the amendments made to claim 33 so that it now includes the features of “objected to” claim 46, this rejection is now moot.

Conclusion:

Since all of the issues raised in the Office Action have been addressed in this Amendment and Reply, Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date March 17, 2008

FOLEY & LARDNER LLP
Customer Number: 22428
Telephone: (202) 945-6014
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399

By Phillip J. Articola

George C. Beck
Registration No. 38,072

Phillip J. Articola
Registration No. 38,819